



THE BRITISH INSTITUTE OF PERSIAN STUDIES

(A Registered Charity)

10 Carlton House Terrace, London SW1Y 5AH

Tel. 020 7969 5203; e-mail: bips@britac.ac.uk

BIPS Research Committee: Terms of Reference

1) Committee Composition

- a) The Research Committee (RC) considers all applications for BIPS funding received under calls for small or large research grants. The RC membership is discussed and agreed by BIPS Council.
- b) The RC comprises a Chair, who also sits on BIPS Management Committee, and at least four other members, at least two of whom must be trustees and members of BIPS Council. The RC can include honorary vice presidents.
- c) External, non-trustee members, from comparable institutions, may be co-opted to the RC, especially where requisite expertise is lacking amongst committee members in order to increase and diversify expert feedback on funding decisions.
- d) The RC Chair should have served as a member of the RC prior to appointment.
- e) RC members serve a three-year term and may not serve two consecutive terms unless they are invited to serve as RC chair. The time limits are designed to ensure equity and diversity of workload, develop experience among Council members, and ensure broad oversight of research priorities.
- f) The RC Chair serves a three-year term and may serve two consecutive terms, and a maximum of three terms in total.

2) Call Planning

- a) BIPS usually has two or three funding calls for small grants per year.
- b) Small funding opportunities are advertised for at least two months in advance of their closing date. Large research funding opportunities are advertised for at least three months in advance of the closing date. This is done by utilising the BIPS website, and other methods such as mailings to membership and distribution via relevant subject listservs and social media.
- c) The terms and conditions of research grants are available on the BIPS website and are also included in the offer letter to successful applicants.
- d) Small grants are research, travel, research assistant and post-doctoral grants under £1,200 per applicant for students (undergraduate and postgraduate) and £5,000 per applicant for



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researchers (post-doctoral and beyond). Large grants (post-doctoral and beyond) are flagship projects or fellowship grants more than £5,000, or between £5,000 and £20,000 per annum.

- e) Grant applicants must provide a project title and summary description suitable for wider distribution and, if successful, publication on the BIPS website.
- f) The RC aims to meet within a month after the deadline for the submission of each round of funding applications.
- g) Personal details will be used only for the purpose of reviewing applications by the RC and BIPS Council, and by the Secretary to contact applicants.

3) Committee Processes

- a) Members of the RC will be informed about, and asked to apply, any evaluation criteria applicable to individual grant applications. Such evaluation criteria, including additional guidance for specific strategic priorities, will be submitted to the RC by the Chair. Changes to evaluation criteria will be submitted to BIPS Council for approval before they are implemented. The evaluation criteria are in Appendix 1.
- b) The RC will liaise with the honorary treasurer to address the following issues: 1) the proposed amount to be granted for each application; and 2) ensuring that the amounts allocated to all grants have been fully spent before the end of the financial year as required by the British Academy.
- c) The RC is responsible for confirming that the terms set out in the annual agreement with the British Academy have been complied with.
- d) The RC submit their recommendations, including the rationale for awarding, to the BIPS Council in a document at least five working days in advance of the relevant Council meeting. Completed application forms will also be made available for scrutiny.
- e) The BIPS Council scrutinises and ratifies all research funding recommendations.
- f) After approval by BIPS Council, successful applicants will be notified in writing within five working days. Unsuccessful applicants will be notified after successful applicants confirm receipt of their funding offer.
- g) Grants approved by BIPS Council will be accrued in the accounting record and payment will be made by the bank authorised signatories to the grantee's institution based on the amounts stated in the Council minutes.



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4) Committee Standards

- a) Any information considered by the RC and BIPS Council in the course of evaluating applications is treated confidentially and not shared with anyone internal or external to BIPS.
- b) Applicants' intellectual property rights, as well as all relevant copyright to materials submitted or discussed as part of potential or actual grant applications are fully respected.
- c) Any potential conflict of interest or a circumstance with the potential to be perceived as a conflict of interest within the RC or BIPS Council must be declared at the earliest opportunity and addressed at the beginning of every RC meeting. Conflict of interest will be stated clearly on all agenda and reflected in the minutes. Such conflict of interest includes relationship, loyalty, and financial conflicts that involve a benefit to the RC member. The individuals concerned must not participate in the ranking or ratification of awards in the same funding round. If this leaves the RC short of committee members, the RC will co-opt temporary RC members for the deliberation of applications. The RC aims to have a quorum of three out of five people when assessing grant applications.
- d) Members of the RC are not eligible to apply for BIPS grants.
- e) BIPS Council members and trustees who do not serve on the RC may apply for small grants or act as named advisors for large grants. At no time shall more than a third of BIPS Council members or trustees benefit from such research support in one financial year.

5) Applicant Standards

- a) No individual can hold more than one BIPS research grant at one time.
- b) Only members of BIPS can apply for funds.
- c) All awardees must have completed all reporting obligations arising from previous BIPS awards received. They would normally be expected to present their research at a BIPS grant holders' workshop.
- d) Awardees must be affiliated (not necessarily employed) with a UK higher education institution or equivalent, including but not limited to universities, libraries, museums, and galleries.
- e) Applicants need to show that they have consulted the host institution about their research application.
- f) Awardees will sign an agreement with specific terms and conditions for their funding scheme and follow those terms and conditions.



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- g) The RC will review and summarise for the BIPS Council the output of awardees in compliance with the relevant reporting obligations of each award.



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Appendix 1: RC's Evaluation Criteria for Applications

Name of applicant, project title, amount applied for	
Criteria and comments	Grade 1-6, where 1 is the highest
Quality and importance of the work proposed, considering: (a) aims and objectives; (b) research questions; (c) research context; and (d) research methods.	
Training and development opportunities available for any research staff as part of the project. This includes opportunities in relation to research expertise, as well as wider opportunities, for example, in connection with the proposed outreach activities.	If not applicable indicate N/A.
Management of the work outlined in the proposal, considering: (a) feasibility of the project and its likelihood of completion within the proposed timescales; (b) appropriateness of the project plan, including arrangements for reviewing progress; (c) arrangements for supervising and managing any staff or students; (d) whether data management plans (if applicable) are appropriate, feasible and valid for the project.	
Value for money and appropriateness of resources requested.	
Proposed outputs, dissemination and impact, including the extent to which the programme of work will result in high quality public output(s), and whether sufficient attention has been given to who the beneficiaries might be and appropriate ways to engage with them throughout the project.	
Thoughts on how application could be improved.	If not applicable indicate N/A.
Substantive comments from RC members (initials).	
References, do they support the project	
Recommendation to BIPS Council (i.e. award in full, do not award, partial award)	£
Agreed amount to be awarded following consultation with BIPS treasurer	£



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Research Grants Grading Descriptors. Source: <https://www.ukri.org/wp-content/uploads/2022/02/AHRC-10022022-grading-descriptors.pdf>

Score	Description	Definition
6	Exceptional Should be funded as a matter of the very highest priority	Work that is at the leading edge internationally, in all of the assessment criteria – scholarship, originality, quality and significance, and meets the majority of them to an exceptional level. Likely to have a significant impact on the field. The proposal’s evidence and justification are fully and consistently provided and management arrangements are clear and convincing.
5	Excellent Should be funded as a matter of priority	Work that is internationally excellent in all of the assessment criteria – scholarship, originality, quality and significance, and meets them to an excellent level. Will answer important questions in the field. The proposal’s evidence and justification are fully and consistently provided and management arrangements are clear and convincing.
4	Very Good Worthy of consideration for funding	Work that demonstrates high international standards of scholarship, originality, quality and significance. Will advance the field of research. It meets all assessment criteria. The proposal’s evidence and justification are good and management arrangements are clear and sound.
3	Satisfactory In a competitive context, the proposal is not considered of sufficient priority to recommend for funding	Work that is satisfactory in terms of scholarship and quality but lacking in international competitiveness. It is limited in terms of originality, innovation and significance and its contribution to the research field. It meets minimum requirements in terms of the assessment criteria and the proposal’s evidence and justification are adequate overall.
2	Not Competitive Not recommended for funding	Work that is of inconsistent quality with some strengths, innovative ideas and good components, but has significant weaknesses or flaws in its conceptualisation, design, methodology and management. Unlikely to advance the field significantly. It does not meet all scheme assessment criteria.
1	Unfundable Not suitable for funding	A proposal that has an unsatisfactory level of originality, quality and significance. Has limited potential to advance research within the field and may be unconvincing in terms of its management arrangements or capacity to deliver proposed activities, especially for the amount of funding being sought. Unlikely to advance the field.



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		It falls short of meeting the assessment criteria for the scheme
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